

The Saturday Gazette.

BLOOMFIELD AND MONTCLAIR.

WILLIAM P. LYON, Editor and Proprietor.
CHARLES M. DAVIS, Associate Editor.

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THE
SATURDAY GAZETTE,
BLOOMFIELD AND MONTCLAIR.
BELLVILLE, CALDWELL AND VERONA.
AN INDEPENDENT WEEKLY JOURNAL
OF LITERATURE, EDUCATION, POL-
ITICS, GENERAL NEWS, AND ES-
PECIALLY OF LOCAL IN-
TERESTS.

All PUBLIC and LOCAL questions, in-
cluding political and social, sanitary and
reformatory, educational and industrial top-
ics, will be clearly presented and fully and
fairly discussed.

It is intended and expected to make it
not only acceptable and interesting to the
general reader, but of special value to citi-
zens of Essex county and of real importance
to every resident of Bloomfield, Montclair,
Caldwell, Bellville and Verona.

Nothing will be admitted to its columns
that is unworthy of cordial welcome to
every family circle.

Settled Clergymen in the county and all
public School Teachers in the county will
receive the paper gratuitously by sending their
address to our office. No postage to
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To ADVERTISERS it should prove a val-
uable medium. Our circulation extends
to every part of Essex county, and con-
siderably elsewhere.

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W. M. P. LYON, Editor and Proprietor,
BLOOMFIELD, N. J.

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A Thanksgiving Story VIXIE'S STRATAGEM.

By H. C. T.

PART I.

It's all bosh, Deacon, all bosh. I've

watched the way this thing works for so

many years, an' seen so many cases of fol-

lerin' one's own bent turn out miserable

and unhappy, an' kin' pint to so many who

listened, reasonable, to a little advice from

them as is older an' knows a thing or two,

an' are livin' nice and comfortable like to-

gether, that I know I'm right when I de-

clare this idee of young folks bein' mated

by natur', and a knowin' it at first sight,

all down right bosh! And, Deacon, I'm

goin' to act on my experience an' convic-

tions, an' allow no such nonsense to make

or break Vixie's future."

Squire Robbins emphasized this with a

quick stride across the room, and, surely,

his long determined upper lip, and the

vertical height of his back-head in con-

nection with his noted firmness, warranted

the serious conviction of Deacon Morse,

that "if Squire Robbins had so ordered

that Vix must take off her hankerlin' after

George Keeler an' put on a prepper likin'

for Felix Morse," it was a declaration that

needed only a little anticipatory patience,

on the part of a third party, to become a

fact. Moreover, Deacon Morse, prided

himself on being open to conviction in all

his views, excepting certain theological

dogmas that had been tried and accepted

by the first-born of his ancestral line; and

having a peculiar pride in the respected

legacy, refused to admit himself amenable

to the interpretation of advanced thought.

But he saw something reasonable in Squire

Robbins' plea, that "Our farm's layin'

alongside one another, as if Natur' intend-

ed them allers to stay by () an' I havin'

daughter as will make as good a wife as

any girl in the county, for any man; an'

you havin' a likely, stiddy, wen, an' both

on us age—in Deacon! Why it'll

be a comfort to both on us to see them

united! the old hum steads an' livin' peace-

ably an' happy together."

Whether or not this unconscious adop-

tion of French marital custom could rea-

sonably furnish extenuating precedent in

that nation's extolled practice, I shall

not stop to discuss; neither shall I

more, respecting Squire Robbins' prospects

in his proposed coercion of Vixie to his

innovating scheme, than that he had care-

lessly omitted two important factors in his

impressive equation of conviction and in-

tervention. The first factor being, that Vixie

was the daughter of Squire Robbins him-

self, inheriting his shrewdness and pur-

pose; and the second factor being, that

Vixie's mother was an "onusually smart

woman," and had "favored" Vixie with a

tact that Squire Robbins himself often

confessed was a remarkable trait in his

wife's character.

That the Squire would have adduced

many more reasons to support his project,

his well known powers of logical simpli-

cation warrant us in believing; but unfor-

tunately for his convincing eloquence, all

further essays in this direction were sud-

denly put an end to by a little squeak

Taking her little freckled face between
her two brown hands, she slowly and si-
lently repeated to herself the dialogue that
had taken place between her father and
Deacon Morse, and almost audibly com-
mented; "Well, two heads may be better
than one, but I reckon they'll have a hard
job in forcing me to give up George Keeler
to marry Felix Morse." And after a long
spell of "good thinking," her woman's
wit declared its proverbial potency, in her
clapping her hands together and exclaim-
ing—"Now for it, father! and if you and
Deacon Morse don't have your hands full
of trouble in this affair, my name isn't
Vix!"

III.

It was Vixie's habit, to go, about dark,
across the first and second meadow,
through the old apple orchard and the
chestnut strip, to the bowlder meadow be-
yond, to collect and drive home the cows
down the lane that wound through the
woods, skirting the north side of the til-
led land. This from having been a duty
of terror, to her younger days, had become
a fascinating privilege. She loved to hear
the glad exuberance of her voice echo and
re-echo away among the old Housatonic
heights; fancying her vocal spirits returned
trilled with the weird potency of caver-
n, stream, and dell, to throw a glamour
of enchantment over her solitary ramble.

And as the cool mist arose from the humid
soil, enveloping bush and tree and mur-
muring brook; and the owl and whippoor-
will hooted and called through the over-
hanging branches, while ever and anon,
the distant tinkling of cow-bells came
with uncertain direction, her fairy land
seemed complete. And had Oberon and
Titania, with their myriad subjects, held
court at some angle of the lane, to give
audience to her enraptured self, she would
have been sustained by the inspiration of
the illusive scene, in making graceful and
stiff, reply to the royal compliments.

But the night after her adventure, while
on her customary errand, she was too
much absorbed in her mundane plans of
extrication from the very prosaic toils of
the good Deacon and Squire were uncon-

sciously weaving about her, to abandon
herself to the enchantment of the seductive
elements—the weird macrocosm giving
way to the intense microcosm of a woman's
mind, bent on the subjection of man's
stupidity to her own good.

So when she suddenly came upon the
laughing, expectant George, sitting com-
fortably upon a huge log, a slight shock
of surprise, followed by the exclamation:
"You, George!" were sufficient to restore
her.

And that rustic gallant, finding the little
brown hand safe within his own, was
about to deliver himself of his customary
nonsense, when his mischievous glance
was transformed to a puzzled look, by
the abrupt query:

"George, how much did you say old
man Colburn wants for his saw mill?"

"Fifteen hundred dollars; why, Vix?"

"I want you to buy it, right away,
George!"

George gave a low incredulous whistle,
then muttered, "If wishes were horses,
beggars might ride!"

"Say you'll buy it, George; I'll furnish
the money! The bank account Aunt Jule
left me will more than cover the price."

"Now, Vix," replied George, straighten-

ing himself, with a proud intention of ob-

servating the conventional code at all has-

ard, "this ain't my way of doin' business;
and moreover it don't sound well. I don't
like it, no how you can fix it, and won't
consent to nothin' of the kind!"

"Then you'll consent to my marryin'
Felix Morse?" answered Vixie with a
nonchalant air.

"Marryin' Felix Morse! What on earth
do you mean, Vix?"

"I simply mean," that unless you do just
as I am a-going to advise you, I'll have to
marry Felix Morse as sure as fate!"

Poor George was so "clean gone" with
fear and amazement, that he could but
gaggingly listen to Vixie's dramatic rebe-

lial of the scene, between her father and
Deacon Morse.

Add when she finally reiterated her con-
viction, that "Our only hope, George, is
in your buying the mill," the bewildered
fellow hastily consented, "to do anything,
Vix, you think right and proper," adding
after a parenthetical reflection of not hav-

ing quite fully rounded his avowal, "for
I'm so dreadful fond of you, Vix!"

To which Vixie made reply—in an ab-

stracted tone that would have been tea-

singly repeated by George under less try-

ing circumstances—"So you've told me several
times before!"

George's honest, earnest devotion to
Vixie bore down all conventional barriers
in this awful emergency; and they two
long and seriously canvassed its probabili-

ties and possibilities.

"Now, Vix," exclaimed George after a
long mutual pause, "what would you do
with that old poke of a fellow, Felix
Morse?"

Father says I would make him as good

a wife as any girl in the county," exasper-

atingly replied Vixie.

"You wouldn't marry him now, would
you Vix?" pleaded the now disconsolate
George, a cold fear creeping through him,
that if their plans should fail, Vixie's filial
love might prove strong enough to bow
her to a father's commands. And when
she soberly replied—"It all depends,
George, it all depends," he felt for the first
time in his laughing careless life the know-

ing of that canker worm—Anxiety.

But it was not in Vixie's nature to re-

main long in low spirits herself, nor would

she suffer any one else within the range of

her gaiety to "murse care" till it became a

patient loved; and a few minutes after she

and George were on their way home, as
gay and happy as if their future had, been
assured. And as their voices died in the dis-

tance, Felix Morse noiselessly parted the
bushes behind the deserted log, and took
an opposite direction, with a just percep-

tible smile struggling over his thoughtful
features.

IV.

There was something peculiarly aggra-

vating to Felix in this being called an old

poke, but much as he disliked the accusa-

tion, he still more disliked the startling

programme he had so surreptitiously be-

come acquainted with. He was sufficient-

ly honest to acknowledge to himself a

vein of meanness running through the

sophism by which he had lulled his con-

science throughout the interesting inter-

view; and this self-questioning joined to

the mollifying influence of Vixie's consid-

erate treatment of his precious dignity,

when his very name should have naturally

caused her the greatest repugnance, had

the effect of influencing him to, at least, no

maliciously hostile attitude.

Perhaps a mysterious Sarah, on the far

opposite side of the Housatonic, the Dea-

con and Squire did not wot of, had claimed

the prospective molestation of which,

caused an alarm that too eagerly forced

this magnanimity; this certain, that Vixie,

who had heard this fact whispered in a

certain circle, with a woman's quick intu-

ition, discerned the true cause of Felix's

attempt at ease when in her presence, and

tactfully accepted him as a trusty ally.

Felix had been frequently invited to

"tea," and the general attendance at

church had been so managed, that he and

Vixie found themselves walking home to-

gether, quite as a matter of course.

Marm Morse wondered audibly at the in-

creasing intimacy, at which the Deacon

chuckled and winked in a vaguely know-

ing manner, while Mother Robbins, though

apparently smiling an approval, was really

struggling to repress a sigh.

Yet Squire Robbins was troubled in

mind. There were three facts daily be-

coming more suspicious in their signifi-

cance, to wit: the unaccountable squeak

of the hall door, the abrupt cessation of

George Keeler's visits, and the apparent

interest Vixie so unaccountably took in

Felix Morse's Company. Now, the Squire

did not put these facts in juxtaposition

and force them to suspicious attitude;

but severally experienced an uncomfortable

feeling whenever they obtruded them-

selves upon his mind.

To such a positively